



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

*A STATISTICAL ACCOUNT of the PARISH of BELLINGHAM,
NORTHUMBERLAND. By WILLIAM HENRY CHARLTON, of
Hesleyside.*

[Read before Section (F) of the British Association, at Newcastle, August, 1863.]

AT the former meeting of this Association, at Newcastle, in 1838, I had the honour of reading a short paper on the statistics of my native parish of Bellingham,* in the county of Northumberland. After the lapse of a quarter of a century, I deem myself fortunate to be able to recur to this subject, and to direct attention to the changes which, during that period, have taken place in this parish, and which are not only of some importance in themselves, but still more so as affording indications of tendencies which, I believe, exist more or less throughout many of the rural districts of Great Britain.

The parish of Bellingham is situated in the western part of the county of Northumberland, and is divided unequally by the valley of the North Tyne river. Its extent is 20,212 acres. The lowest land in the parish is about 400 feet, the highest about 1,300 feet above the level of the sea. A very large proportion of the parish is covered with heath or coarse grass, although the extensive works of drainage, which commenced about eighteen years since, have, in many parts, effected a great improvement in the quality of the pastures. The proportion of arable land is very small, much less than it was in 1838, the farmers having found it more profitable to lay down their land to grass. The climate, though rainy and sometimes severe, is remarkably healthy. The average annual fall of rain is about 45 inches, being almost double the amount of rainfall at the mouth of the Tyne, forty miles to the eastward. The highest temperature observed during the last twenty-five years was 83° Fahrenheit in the shade, the lowest 10° below Zero Fahrenheit. The mean temperature of the twenty-four hours of Christmas-day, 1860, was 0° Fahrenheit, the maximum temperature having been + 5°, the minimum — 5°. This day, it will be remembered, was remarkable throughout Great Britain for its intense cold.

The geology of the parish belongs to the lower portion of the great northern coalfield. The coal seams are, however, very inferior to those in the more eastern parts of the county, being only from 20 inches to 3 feet in thickness, and not generally of good quality.

* The paper alluded to will be found in vol. i of the *Statistical Journal*, pp. 420 *et seq.*

There are four small coal pits now worked in the parish, which employ altogether not more than seven men and seven boys. The price of coal at the pit's mouth is *2s. 4d.* per cart load, or *7d.* per horse load. In 1838, I find the price recorded to have been *2s.* per cart load, and *6d.* per horse load. There is a small lead mine in the parish, but it has never been profitable. The parish has several excellent quarries of freestone, one or two of which are of fine quality. The limestone beds are thin, and generally lie deep. There are five limekilns in the parish, but they burn little or no lime at present, owing to the abundant supply of lime now brought by railway from the great limestone beds in the neighbourhood of Hexham. The price of lime brought to Bellingham by railway is *7s.* per ton at the station. Ironstone is tolerably abundant. In the year 1841, a blast furnace was erected at Bellingham, by the Hareshaw Iron Company. The ironstone and limestone were procured in the immediate neighbourhood of the furnace, the coal was brought by a tramway from a pit about three miles off. The furnace was "blown out" in 1848, previous to which two other furnaces had been built, but were never in operation. Since 1848 the iron works have never been resumed, and as the whole of their "plant" was sold last year, there is little or no likelihood of their being so, particularly since the discovery and working of the great Cleveland ironfield, in Yorkshire. The ironstone of Bellingham is, however, of remarkably good quality, so much so, that it was largely used in the construction of the High Level Bridge at Newcastle in 1847.

The length of public roads in the parish is about 28 miles—in 1838 it was 16 or 17 miles. This great addition to the roads has been caused almost entirely by the enclosure of Hareshaw Common, containing between 8,000 and 9,000 acres, and wholly in the parish of Bellingham. Most of these roads are in tolerable condition, and are likely to be still further improved, as the parish has this year been included in a district under the new Highway Act. There is no turnpike road or pontage in the parish.

The population of the parish was by the census returns—

	Persons.
In 1821	1,396
„ '31	1,460
„ '41	1,730
„ '51	1,594
„ '61	1,662

It will thus be seen that the population of the whole parish is nearly stationary, but it is well worthy of remark, that the parish is divided into six townships, one of which, the township of Belling-

ham, consists almost entirely of a small, but very ancient market town, and that in this township alone there has been a steady increase of population during the last twenty years, the numbers being—

	1841.	1851.	1861.	
	Persons. 672	Persons. 770	Persons. 866	

Of the other five townships composing the parish of Bellingham, four exhibited a large decrease in population, and only one a very slight increase, in 1861, as compared with 1841. The population of these five townships may be looked upon as completely agricultural.

In 1854 and 1859 Acts of Parliament were obtained for the construction of a railway, called the Border Counties Railway, from a point near Hexham, up the valley of the North Tyne, to Riccarton Junction, on the Border Union Railway between Hawick and Carlisle. The Border Counties Railway, which is nearly 42 miles in length, was opened throughout on the 1st of July, 1862, simultaneously with the Border Union Railway, thus placing the parish of Bellingham within an easy distance, in point of time, from Newcastle, Carlisle, Hawick, and Edinburgh. One of the first results of this facility of railway communication was the establishment last year of three annual fairs, or trysts, at Bellingham, namely, one in July, for the sale of wool; one in August, for the sale of lambs; one in October, for the sale of ewes and wethers. These fairs have been well supported since their establishment, and are likely to assume a considerable degree of importance.

There are five schools in the parish, three of which are situated in or near to Bellingham. The number of scholars is considerable for the population, and as education is generally valued, there are very few adults in the parish, who cannot, at least, read and write.

In 1831, the declared annual value of the parish of Bellingham was 6,435*l.* In 1863, the declared annual value of the same was 8,351*l.*, being an increase of nearly one-fourth. The average annual expenditure for the relief of the poor in the parish, during the three years ending 25th March, 1835, was 681*l.* The same for the three years ending 25th March, 1863, was 377*l.*, being a decrease of nearly one-half. This decrease has been more marked during the last year or two, in consequence of the important alterations lately made in the Law of Settlement and Removal, and perhaps still more so by the improved mode of assessment, which latter came into full operation in the autumn of last year.

I shall now proceed to answer a series of queries put forth

by the Statistical Society of London many years ago, and of which I availed myself in my statistical account of the parish, in 1838.

1. The number of acres in the parish is 20,212.

Owing to the want of an accurate survey, the quantity given by me in 1838, was "about 18,000."

2. The number of farms in the parish is 76. In 1838 it was 77.
3. The mode of letting the land is now generally upon *leases of from seven to fifteen years*. In 1838, the land was generally let *from year to year*.
4. The size of the several farms varies from 800 to 20 acres.
5. The soil is generally light, rather sandy in the valleys, black peat earth upon the hills.
6. The subsoil is partly cold clay and partly sand.
7. In 1838 the state of drainage was very bad, though in some few places it was beginning to improve. Since that date drainage has, for the last eighteen years been going on extensively, and with most beneficial results. There are in the parish two kilns for the manufacture of draining tiles.
8. The number of acres under the plough is 800. In 1838 it was 1,582. This important change may be traced to the high price of stock (*viz.*, cattle and sheep, particularly the latter), which has caused a great quantity of tillage land throughout the country to be laid down to grass within the last ten years.
10. The quantity of pasture land is about 6,500 acres.
11. Of meadow land, about 1,500 acres.
12. The number of acres of wood is 450.
13. The number of acres of heath, marsh, &c., is 11,550.
14. The average quantity of hay is 1,440 acres of natural grass, or meadow hay, and 60 of artificial grass.
15. Number of acres of wheat in 1863, 40; in 1838, 200.
16. The same of barley in 1863, 70; in 1838, 300.
17. The same of oats in 1863, 300; in 1838, 400.
18. Rye, beans, and peas, none.
19. Potatoes in 1863, 30 acres; in 1838, 38.
20. Number of acres under fallow in 1863, 200; 180 sown with turnips; 140 fed off with sheep on the ground, and 14 drawn off. In 1838, 400 acres fallow; 200 sown with turnips, of which 100 were fed off with sheep, and 100 drawn off.
21. The number of horses employed for agricultural purposes in 1863, 66; in 1838, 119.
22. Number of horses employed for other purposes in 1863, 56; in 1838, 17.

23. Number of grazing cattle, exclusive of milch cows, in 1863, 660; in 1838, 50.
24. Number of milch cows in 1863, 220; in 1838, 460.
25. Number of calves bred in 1863, 220; of which 160 reared, and 60 made fat for meat; in 1838, 410 for rearing, 50 for meat.
26. Number of Leicester sheep in 1863, 110; in 1838, 22.
26. Number of short-woolled sheep, being Cheviot, black-faced, and a cross between the black-faced and Leicester, in 1863, 9,800; in 1838, 5,080.
27. Lambs of all descriptions bred in the year 1863, 5,000; about 400 fattened and 4,600 for keeping; in 1838, 1,150; of which 300 fattened, and 850 for keeping.
28. Number of sheep shorn in 1863, 8,000; in 1838, 4,800.
29. Quantity of cheese (old milk) made in 1863, 60 cheeses; in 1838, 1,120 cheeses.
30. Butter made in the year, 300 firkins, or about 17,000 lbs. it being mostly sold in lbs.

The usual rate of wages daily for common labourers, in summer and winter respectively, is 3*s.* in summer and 2*s.* 6*d.* in winter. In 1838 it was 2*s.* 6*d.* and 2*s.* Women employed as day-labourers are paid at the rate of 1*s.* per day, except in harvest, when they have at least 2*s.* In 1838, women had from 9*d.* to 10*d.* per day for ordinary work. Children earn 6*d.* or 7*d.* per day for ordinary work, and 1*s.* in harvest. A male farm-servant, or hind, is usually hired by the year, and receives now 16*s.* per week. In 1838, he received from 12*s.* to 13*s.* Women farm-servants are hired by the half-year, and receive now 8*l.* for the summer half and 4*l.* for the winter half-year. The hiring usually takes place in May and November. In 1838, women farm-servants received about 6*l.* 10*s.* for the summer, and 3*l.* for the winter half-year. Shepherds now receive from 16*s.* to 17*s.* per week, money wages. In 1838, they were always paid *in kind*, having a portion of the stock set apart for their own use and profit; often forty or fifty sheep, and a cow or two.

The rental of many farms in the parish has risen considerably during the last twenty-five years, owing principally to the rise in the prices of sheep and of wool. The highest rental of any farm in the parish of Bellingham is at present 440*l.* per annum, the farm being partly pastoral and partly agricultural.

Since 1838 there has also been a great improvement, not only in the farmhouses and their outbuildings, but in the cottages of the labouring classes. Gardens have sprung up everywhere, and many of the farmers and labourers take an interest in the cultivation of flowers. The cheapness of fuel is also a most important element as regards both the comfort and health of the labourers. A good fire

of coal, which is kept up all the year round, gives both warmth and ventilation to the cottages.

Before concluding this paper, I would again direct attention to the *character* of the changes which the lapse of twenty-five years has brought about in this parish, as in many others of the North of England.

1. The diminution of *arable*, and the increase of *grass land*.
2. The increase in the quantity of stock fed upon such land.
3. The improvements which drainage has effected in such land.
4. The increased annual value and higher rental of the land.
5. The increase of the wages of farm-servants and day-labourers.
6. The diminution of the poor rate.
7. The stationary, or rather retrograde, state (as regards numbers) of the *rural or agricultural* population, and the increase of the *town* population, even where there are no manufactures to stimulate it.

Whatever may be the ultimate effect of these changes, it is certain that they have hitherto worked beneficially for all classes, and that, generally speaking, the inhabitants of the parish of Bellingham, and of this part of Northumberland, have never been so well off as they are at the present time. May those who shall be living twenty-five years hence, be able to give as satisfactory a report!
